

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1033
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALEXANDRIA 737

FROM AMBASSADOR IN ALEXANDRIA:

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XF, EG, IS
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REACTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE
STATEMENT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

REF: CAIRO 12688

1. FAHMY, WHOSE PENCHANT FOR CARPING IS NORMALLY
LIMITLESS, EXPRESSED WARM APPRECIATION LAST NIGHT
FOR PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT
ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS. HE SAID PRESIDENT SADAT
EQUALLY PLEASED. IN FAHMY'S VIEW, ACTION BY PRIMIN
BEGIN TO LEGALIZE THREE WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS
IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON WAS A
DELIBERATE ISRAELI ACT OF DEFIANCE OF PRESIDENT
CARTER'S EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO SUCH SETTLEMENTS.
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EGYPTIAN AND ARAB PUBLIC HAD BEEN WONDERING WHAT USG
REACTION WOULD BE. THERE HAD BEEN CONCERN, FAHMY
CLAIMED, THAT WE WOULD NOT RESPOND AND SIMPLY ALLOW
MATTER TO PASS. ANY SUCH INACTION WOULD HAVE
ENCOURAGED BEGIN. PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS STATEMENT,
EVEN IF IT DID DOWNGRADE IMPORTANCE OF LEGALIZATION
MEASURE, HAD HEARTENED ARABS. EVEN PALESTINIANS HAVE

APPLAUDED IT.

2. PREDICTABLY, FAHMY COULD NOT LET MATTER PASS WITHOUT ADDING USG SHOULD NOW TAKE SOME TANGIBLE FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO SHOW ITS DISPLEASURE AND TO EMPHASIZE TO BEGIN THAT ISRAEL CANNOT PROCEED WITH ITS SETTLEMENTS POLICY WITH IMPUNITY. I TOLD FAHMY THAT, AS HE KNEW, THE ISRAELIS ARE WELL AWARE OF OUR STRONG OPPOSITION TO THEIR SETTLEMENTS POLICIES IN THE OCCUPIED AREAS.

3. FAHMY NOTED THAT PLO OBSERVER AT USUN IS PRESSING FOR UNSC MEETING TO DEBATE BEGIN SETTLEMENTS ANNOUNCEMENT. HE, FAHMY, HAD INSTRUCTED EGYPTIAN PERMREP TRY TO PARRY THIS AS UNHELPFUL IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. INSTEAD, ARAB REPS COULD SEND LETTER TO SYG EXPRESSING THEIR DISPLEASURE, WHICH THEY HAVE DONE. GOE ACTION HAD ELICITED SOME PLO AND RADICAL ARAB CRITICISM. PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT HELPFUL IN ENABLING GOE DEFEND ITS STAND. FAHMY ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT UNLESS ISRAELIS DESIST, WHICH HE BELIEVES IS UNLIKELY, ARABS MAY STILL AT SOME POINT HAVE TO TAKE MATTER TO UNSC. I AGAIN TOLD HIM ANY SUCH UNSC ACTION LIKELY BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. SOMEWHAT DEJECTEDLY, FAHMY RESPONDED THAT IF ISRAELIS PAY NO HEED TO USG AND EEC EXPRESSIONS OF DISAPPROVAL OF SETTLEMENTS POLICY AND ME PEACE PROCESS IS MAKING NO HEADWAY (WHICH HE FEARS WILL BE THE CASE), ARABS
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MAY HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GO UNSC. THEY MUST FIND SOME WAY TO BRING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON ISRAEL OT DISIST.

4. COMMENT: ASSUME FAHMY HAD NOT YET HEARD OF ISRAELI ANNOUNCEMENT OF TWO NEW ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS AT YAMIT, SINCE HE MADE NO MENTION OF THEM. ONCE HE HEARS OF THEM, WE MAY EXPECT SHARP REACTION. BOTH SADAT AND HE ARE HIGHLY EXERCISED ABOUT ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES AT YAMIT AND IT IS UNLIKELY GOE, ONCE AWARE OF ISRAELI INTENTIONS, WILL LET MATTERS STAND WITHOUT SOME SHARP PUBLIC RESPONSE.

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